

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CANBER 05762 210830Z
ACTION L-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 CA-01 VO-05 PPT-01
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-----005901 210851Z /20

O R 210739Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 3860
DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MANILA NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL SYDNEY IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE
INFO AMCONSUL AUCKLAND
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY SUVA
AMCONSUL VANCOUVER
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 5762

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: CFED, PORS, SOCI, PDIP, CVIS (MEIER, JOHN H.), CPRS,
TN, US, CA
SUBJECT: ARREST AND EXTRADITION OF JOH HERBERT MEIER, AKA IVOR
A. ROBERTSON

REF: (A) MANILA 12446 (B) WELLINGTON 3792 (C) WELLINGTON 3796

1. AS INSTRUCTED, EMBASSY PRESENTED INFORMAL REQUEST TO
DFA ASKING THAT JOHN HERBERT MEIER BE ARRESTED PROVISIONALLY
PENDING A FORMAL EXTRADITION REQUEST.

2. SHORTLY AFTER RECEIPT OF EMBASSY'S COMMUNICATION IN DFA,
FIRST ASSISTANT SECRETARY COOPER OF WESTERN DIVISION CALLED
DCM TO ASK IF WE HAD CONSIDERED POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS
OF HOLDING MEIER, KING OF TONGA'S FAVORITE, WHO WAS A "PRO-
TECTED PERSON" AND WHO BORE A TONGAN DIPLOMATIC PASSPORT.
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DCM SAID HE WOULD LOOK INTO MATTER IMMEDIATELY, AND
CALL BACK.

3. BEFORE EMBASSY WAS ABLE TO COMPLETE CHECKS,
COOPER CALLED BACK TO REPORT THAT MEIER HAD LEFT SYDNEY
UNEXPECTEDLY AND HEADED FOR NEW ZEALAND.

4. UPON RECEIPT REFTELS (B) AND (C), DCM AGAIN CONTACTED COOPER, PRESSED ON HIM URGENCY OF MATTER, CITED EXTRADITION TREATY AND ASKED THAT MEIER BE ARRESTED PROVISIONALLY IMMEDIATELY UPON HIS RETURN TO SYDNEY.

5. AFTER DFA CONSULATION WITH COOPER, DCM SPOKE WITH RICHARD SMITH, CHIEF OF LEGAL AND TREATIES DEPARTMENT, AND WILLIAM BRAY, WHO HANDLES EXTRADITIONS. SMITH AND BRAY WERE GIVEN REFTEL (A). SMITH REEMPHASIZED POLITICAL SENSITIVITY OF MATTER TO GOA, AND ASKED THAT US GOVERNMENT EXERT UTMOST EFFORT TO CUT DOWN TIME DURING WHICH MEIER WAS DETAINED PROVISIONALLY, BEFORE HE LEFT FOR US UNDER ESCORT. TO THAT END HE URGED THAT ALL PAPERS BE EXPEDITED. HE ADDED THAT DFA WAS NOT PREPARED TO SAY HOW LONG IT COULD WITHSTAND POLITICAL PRESSURE WHEN PROVISIONAL ARREST OF MEIER KNOWN TO TONGAN KING AND LATTER STARTED TO PRESSURE HIS SOUTH PACIFIC NEIGHBOR AUSTRALIA.

6. SMITH SAID HE WAS IN TOUCH WITH AG OFFICE, BUT WAS UNABLE TO SAY AT THIS TIME WHEN MEIER WOULD BE ARRESTED OR WHERE IN AUSTRALIA. HE ADMITTED THAT MEIER WOULD BE SUBJECT OF EXTREME ATTENTION FROM POLICE BODIES, HOWEVER, DURING INTERIM.

7. ACTION REQUESTED: WHILE AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND AND US REALIZE THAT KING OF TONGA EASILY DUPED, AND APPARENTLY ALONG IN SUPPORT OF MEIER, PRESENT CASE IN ITS POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS WORRIES GOA GREATLY. THAT WORRY IS NOT CONFIDENTIAL

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DIMINISHED BY THE FACT THAT KING OF TONGA SCHEDULED TO MAKE OFFICIAL VISIT HERE EARLY NEXT YEAR. WE URGE THAT DEPARTMENT AND ALL INVOLVED DO UTMOST TO EXPEDITE PAPER WORK THAT WILL MAKE FORMAL EXTRADITION REQUEST COMPLETE. EMBASSY ADVANCES POSSIBILITY THAT IN SITUATION WHERE WE EXPECT DELAY IN PROVIDING GOA WITH NECESSARY PAPERWORK TO BE PROTRACTED, IT MIGHT BE EXPEDIENT TO DEAL DIRECTLY WITH KING OF TONGA AND ATTEMPT TO CONVINCE HIM THAT HIS TRUST IN MEIER IS BADLY PLACED. WE OF COURSE ARE NOT IN A POSITION HERE TO MAKE THAT DECISION.
ALSTON

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